

15:0.7
c.2

The Blessedness of Dying in the Lord.

A

SERMON,

DELIVERED AT HARTFORD,

January 23, 1810.

AT THE FUNERAL OF

MRS. AMELIA FLINT,

CONSORT OF THE

REV. ABEL FLINT,

WHO DIED OF A CONSUMPTION, JANUARY 19.

BY ANDREW YATES,

PASTOR OF THE FIRST CHURCH IN EAST-HARTFORD,



HARTFORD :

PRINTED BY HUDSON AND GOODWIN.

1810.

FUNERAL SERMON.



REVELATION xiv. 13.

And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth : Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors : and their works do follow them.

DEATH is with great propriety and elegance of speech styled, in the book of Job, *The king of terrors*. Many considerations conspire to clothe death with terrors. It is painful to leave the society of those dear friends, who have been the partners of our joys and sorrows, and with whom we have walked and taken sweet counsel, in our journey through this wilderness world. The feelings of our nature recoil at the thought, that worms shall destroy these our mortal bodies, and that they shall turn mouldering into dust. Conscious also of guilt, we expect a day of retribution ; and are unavoidably alarmed at the thought of appearing a naked spirit, before a judge who is infinitely and immutably holy. The allwise God hath appointed thus, that we may feel and acknowledge we are under his displeasure, and may see the evil of sin, which hath brought these “ and all our woe ” upon us.

The ingenuity and wisdom of man have been exerted, to the utmost, to withstand the terrors of death ; but

with no rational success. Alas ! what comfort can it afford the dying sons of men, to tell them, in the language of philosophers, *Death is the law of our nature, the necessary tenure of our lives ?* This is only declaring the fact. And it is this which adds to the terrors of death, that it is irresistible ; that we inhabit frames which in their very nature must decay and die. And what consolation can that delusion afford, *that death is an eternal sleep ?* Miserable suggestion ! It is but another name for annihilation itself. To cease to be forever—to die and vanish, like the beasts of the field—yea to be like the tree of the forest, which hath no life—how ignoble and debased is the mind that cherishes the thought ! *Man that is in honor and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish.*

Vain is every device of man to remove the terrors of death, or to cheer the gloomy darkness of the grave. God only, who is the fountain of light, of life, and of blessedness, can irradiate the dark valley of death, disarm him of his terrors, and support and comfort the soul trembling under his power. And blessed be God, who hath exercised his mercy toward us. All that is necessary for our deliverance he hath effected, and hath revealed the glad tidings in the gospel. A voice, sounding from the excellent glory, spake to the beloved disciple, saying, *Write, blessed are the dead.* Let it be on record, for a memorial, to comfort and support the drooping spirits of future generations, that the dead are blessed, are happy. But is this the case with all that die, with all the dead ? Are they all happy ? No—For we read in verses 10 and 11 preceding the text, of some “ who shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture, into the cup of his indignation ; who shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the lamb ; the smoke of whose torment

ascendeth up for ever and ever : and who have no rest day nor night.”

The character of those who are blessed in their death is plainly expressed. Lest any mistake, and flatter themselves with the expectation of blessedness in death, while they have no foundation to support their hope, it is written, *Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth.* The nature of their happiness is mentioned : *Yea saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors ; and their works do follow them.*

The subject of these words is obviously suitable for our consideration, on the present interesting and solemn occasion.

It is proposed to shew,

I. The character of those who are blessed in death.

II. The nature of their blessedness.

I. I am to shew, The character of those who are blessed in death.

They are such as *die in the Lord.* This phrase is sometimes rendered, *for the Lord*, because it refers particularly to those holy martyrs, in the cause of the Lord Jesus, who, as the apostle John expresses it, *loved not their lives unto the death* ; who suffered and died in the cause of Christianity ; who sealed the profession of their faith and hope in Christ by their blood. But it was not their dying *for the Lord*, which secured blessedness to these martyrs. It is possible that men may “ bestow all their goods to feed the poor, and give their bodies to be burned,” and yet be nothing profited. It was their being *in the Lord*, which enabled these martyrs, in a manner acceptable to God, both to endure and die under the persecutions of their enemies. And it was their being *in the Lord* which secured their blessedness in death. It is this same relation to the Lord which secures blessedness to all his people. *Precious in the sight of God is the death of all his saints.* They are all in him. This peculiarly distinguishes them as his.

What is it to be in the Lord ? An answer to this enquiry will present to our view the character of those who are blessed in death.

To be *in* the Lord Christ is an expression often used in the sacred scriptures, and is appropriate to the condition of believers. It implies an interest in the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, by faith ; a union of the soul to him, by the indwelling of the spirit ; and a possession of that heavenly temper, which alone can render us meet for the enjoyment of celestial happiness.

1. The believer becomes interested in the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, by his faith. " Him hath God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood." And the sinner, made conscious of his guilt and pollution, of his utter condemnation by the law, of his exclusion from the favor, and his subjection to the wrath, of a holy God, and of his entire helplessness in himself, looks and flees unto Christ, by faith. In him he beholds one " who is exalted of God to be a prince and a saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins ; who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth ;" and who delivers from the curse of the law, by virtue of his own obedience and death. Renouncing every principle of self dependence, the repenting sinner reposes the full confidence of his soul in Christ as his surety, his deliverer, his only and safest refuge. With Paul he desires to " be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." And with the same apostle, he is satisfied that " to them who are in Christ Jesus, there is no condemnation." Like the manslayer, in the city of refuge, he is safe from the avenger of blood.

2. The believer is united to Christ, by the indwelling of the spirit. Every believing soul is thus favored. *If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his.*

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you ? By virtue of this inhabitation of the spirit, believers become united to the Lord, as the branches to the vine, and as the members of the body to the head. Yea they are one with him, in a sense, as the Father and the Son are one. He is in them by the influences of his spirit, and they in him as the source of influences.

3. The consequence of this faith and union by the spirit, is that newness of heart which alone can render us meet for celestial happiness. Faith works by love, and purifies the heart. Christ, the object of faith, is altogether lovely, and an assimilation to him is most ardently sought. The holy spirit dwelling in the soul transforms and sanctifies it. He effects a conformity to God, the impress of the divine image.

The character of those who are in the Lord, as it is thus far considered, is internal, and visible to the searcher of hearts alone. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness;" the soul is united to Christ; and in the spirit of our minds are we renewed. But we must remember that this necessarily becomes visible to men also. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. What concord hath Christ with Belial? Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord. If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above." A public acknowledgment of Christ before the world, as our Saviour, a separation from the enemies of the Saviour, so as not only to avoid their counsels and ways, but to avoid them as intimate friends, and to have our conduct influenced by a supreme regard to divine things, these constitute the character of such as are in Christ, as they are distinguished by men. These are the expressions of the reality of this spiritual life, as much as the motions of the body

are the expressions of animal life. *Whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple*, saith the Saviour. The form of godliness without the spirit, is indeed hypocrisy ; but we must not forget that all pretence to the spirit, without the form, is delusion. Faith without works is dead. There is nothing spiritual in it. A faith that is operative, a union which draws and enkindles the affections, a regeneration which is the assimilation of the soul to God and celestial spirits, a character which is manifest in their walk and conversation, these distinguish such as are in the Lord.

This character, wherever it is found, is the object of God's complacency and care. All who have it are styled his people, his friends, his children. They are interested in all the exceeding great and precious promises of the gospel. They are continually regarded as beloved in Christ. Nothing shall separate them from the love of God in Christ. In all their changes and trials, the promise of God to them is sure having this seal, "the Lord knoweth them that are his." Of these it is said, *Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth*. In their death they are viewed as the favorites of Heaven, and heirs of glory ; and from the very moment of death are partakers of the blessedness reserved for them. Like Lazarus, delivered from his afflictions by ministering angels, their souls are transported immediately into the mansions of the blessed.

It was proposed to shew,

II. The nature of their blessedness.

Many very interesting particulars might be enumerated, in illustration of this point. For the sake of brevity we shall confine ourselves to those concisely expressed in the words under consideration. These are the most important, and may be supposed to embrace all others. They are expressed with great emphasis. *Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors ;*

and their works do follow them. They are released from every toil and suffering, they enter on the possession of the greatest joys.

1. *They rest from their labors.* What is this world but a scene of toil and trial, from our birth to the moment of our death?

Labor in making provision for the support of these frail and dying frames is our duty, and is necessary to mental as well as bodily comfort. But this labor is a weariness to the flesh. It is a part of the curse, not that we are to till and dress the productions of the ground for our nourishment, for that was the employment of man in a state of innocence; but that "in the sweat of our face we are to eat bread, till we return unto the ground."

Labor with those around us, to bring them to the knowledge of the Saviour of sinners, is the calling of every believer in Christ. There is no condition in which he is placed in this world, but there is something to be done for his Lord towards others. The servant called to minister in holy things, the parent surrounded by children, for whom he has brought his soul under vows, to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, the master surrounded by those that serve him, the neighbor encircled by souls having a claim on his benevolence, every one, according to his standing and influence, has labor of this kind. And every believer is desirous, and endeavors in this way, to do good; he is mindful to communicate. However pleasing the service of our master may be, and that it is so every christian knows, it is nevertheless attended with sufferings and trials, both from the frailty of our frames, and from the perverseness of the natural heart. The most diligent and unremitted care and instruction, the most affectionate counsels and admonitions, and the most importunate petitions for others, are often in vain. All are inef

fectual. Ministers have sufferings peculiar to themselves, in such unsuccessful toils. And parents, under the pangs of disappointment, are sometimes sunk with sorrow into the grave.

In our individual concerns we have labor with attendant sorrow. These mortal bodies are impregnated with death. In pain, in weariness, in sickness, we wear away, until we die and turn to dust. *Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward.* Every one has a portion of this gall and wormwood, the bitterness of the original sentence, in his cup. None are exempt entirely, though some have more of labors and sufferings of this kind than others.

In the concern of his salvation, the believer has his greatest labors. By the assistance of divine grace, he is enabled to work out his own salvation : but it is the labor of a warfare, and is accompanied with fear and trembling, With the remains of sin within himself every believer has to struggle. Evil in thought, in desire, and in his very susceptibility of impressions which are sinful, calls for continual vigilance. He finds a law in his members warring against the law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin. He suffers under the weight, and exclaims, " O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death !" The temptations and oppositions of the world also beset the believer, and occasion sore trials. The spirit of the world, which drenched the earth with the blood of martyrs in former ages, did not die with those persecutors, but still exists on earth. It is only under the restraints of him who hath the hearts of all men in his hands. The most powerful efforts of the world, in opposition to the believer's progress, are its temptations. These call for his watchfulness and diligence continually, that he may not be seduced and ensnared by its delusive promises. In addition to these trials, which respect the

salvation of the believer, are those that arise from the subtle adversary of souls. Those desponding impressions, respecting the greatness of our guilt, as if it were beyond the mercy of God to pardon,—respecting the mercy of the Saviour, as if he would not have compassion on such as have lived in hostility against him,—respecting our abiding sins, as if they were inconsistent with the experience of renewing grace,—respecting our improvements under the gospel, as if they were not only not answerable to our advantages, but not even sufficient to encourage a hope that we grow in grace ; and on the other hand, impressions filling the heart with pride and selfconceit ; these are assaults of him who is the enemy of our peace. They are fiery darts which can be repelled only by the shield of faith. They call for exertion, and occasion trials. In repelling these and the like, “ we wrestle against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” In this warfare with the flesh, the world and Satan we labor, as long as we live on earth. There is no discharge while here below.

Such then are the labors from which they rest who die in the Lord. Labors in the concerns of the body ; labors for the spiritual welfare of others ; labors under affliction and bodily infirmity ; labors in the spiritual warfare with indwelling sin, with an ensnaring world, and with the wiles of the great adversary of souls. These we are to endure and encounter until death, the last enemy, assail us with his terrors. After the experience of many fears and doubts, repelled by faith, after the struggles and agonies of death, the believer rises victorious, and his soul ascends in triumph singing, “ Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Now he is blessed in complete deliverance from all his trials. The body with all its sickening con-

cerns is left to rest and wait in the grave, for the day of its change at the sound of the last trumpet ; friends and dear connections, although they may be viewed from the realms of glory, whatever may be their condition or course, no more give pain ; the glory of God, spreading and growing in the progress of all things, employs every power ; every remnant of corruption is done away ; the spirit is perfected in purity, while the world, and hell, and death are far beneath concern. Blessed deliverance ! Happy spirits which are released from this noisome, sinful, miserable, pestilential vale of tears, and are released from every affliction and every pain ! How great their deliverance ! What occasion to sing, in highest notes, the everlasting song, “ Unto him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,—to him be glory and dominion forever and ever.”

2. This deliverance is but part, and great and glorious as it is, it is but a small part of their blessedness, who die in the Lord. It is but a negative blessedness, a release from evil. There is still a portion which is unutterably greater. They not only *rest from their labors*, but *their works do follow them*.

Altho the good deeds of believers cannot merit the favor of God, or entitle them to the joys of Heaven, no not those of the most eminent saints, nor those which these have most acceptably performed, through faith in the Redeemer ; yet their works, their deeds of faith, their conduct flowing from newness of life, do follow them. In every instance, even to the giving of a cup of cold water to a disciple of Christ, they are perfectly known unto God, they follow the dead in Christ ascending to glory. They are a memorial before saints and angels, and an evidence of the heavenly temper from whence they flowed, and of a right of admission, through the merits of Christ, into the assembly of the just in Heaven. They are with them bringing to re-

membrance their former conflicts, their trials, and their victories through abounding grace. They follow them to be the rule of that approving judgment by which, in the last day, they shall be pronounced, in the presence of an assembled universe, the blessed of the Father, and be admitted to the inheritance of that kingdom which was prepared for them from the foundation of the world. This is one view in which we are to understand that their works do follow them. And it is a consolation, as well as an encouragement, to the faithful on earth. But it must be understood as especially exhibiting a more glorious and delightful truth which is this, the works, the employments and exercises of the redeemed on earth shall not be suspended at death, but they shall follow them, and, with every perfection of performance and joy, shall be continued in Heaven. The scene indeed is changed, but changed from faith and hope to the vision and fruition of God ; from imperfection in every thing, to perfection in all things ; from grace to its consummation in glory.

What are all the employments and exercises of the spirits of the blessed in Heaven, we cannot tell. " Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Enough however is revealed to teach us that, except those exercises which regard our trials here below, the same we delight in on earth are continued in perfection in Heaven. There are beheld the crucified, and risen, and ascended Redeemer. With the vision of spirits they see, without the intervention of a shade they behold, and with conceptions infallible and enlarged they dwell on his ineffable glories. They unite in his praise saying, " Worthy is the lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." There they behold the works of God in his creation and gov-

ernment of the world, and in view of the divine end accomplished, with the assured expectation of his growing glories in them, to the consummation of all things, they rejoice in his government ; they glorify him because he hath taken to himself his great power and hath reigned. " And I heard," saith John giving an account of his vision of Heaven, " and I heard the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." There that charity, that love, which is the bond of perfectness, abideth and groweth forever. Every soul is united to every soul, while all are in union with the God of love. There the warmest gratitude is felt and expressed, in the remembrance of the redemption of those around the throne. They sing, " 'Thou hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation." There are every employment and enjoyment that is spiritual. They constitute the works that follow them and render them blessed.

Such is the blessedness of them that die in the Lord. Imperfect indeed must be all our conceptions of it. " We see only through a glass darkly." But imperfect as our views are we must acknowledge, their joy is unspeakable and glorious. Surely *blessed are the dead who die in the Lord*. Their deliverance is joyful, their happiness glorious.

As an improvement which we all should make of the subject, to which our attention has been called, suffer the suggestion of but one reflection. As it is but one it may be easily retained, and as it embraces every thing important to us, I pray God may lead us to remember and dwell upon it to our profit. It is this : How important is it that we never rest contented without an interest in Jesus Christ ! It is utterly impossible for the guilty and unholy to enjoy God's favor, here or

hereafter. Darkness may as well become light, and all the contrarieties of nature may as well be reconciled. There is no way in which pardon can be bestowed, and the image of God restored to the souls of fallen men, but through the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ. "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." There is no interest in Christ but by a sincere abhorrence of sin in ourselves, a repose of our trust in him, as that of the helpless on him that is mighty to save, and a union of our souls to him by the spirit. There is no foundation to flatter ourselves that we are in the Lord by repentance, faith, and spiritual union, unless it appear in our objects of delight, in our reverence for God and his institutions, in our walk and conversation, that old things have passed away with respect to us, and all things have become new. "Marvel not that I say unto you, ye must be born again. Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

If you are not interested in Christ, you cannot be happy here or hereafter. You must pass your days on earth in continued disappointment, and finally be excluded from every enjoyment that is rational and glorious. You must be shut out from God, whose favor is life and whose frown is death. But on the other hand, if you are interested in the Saviour, you shall be blessed. Under all the afflictions and trials of life you shall be sustained, and receive the consummation of every wish in death. All the afflictions you may be called to endure in this life, however great they may be, shall be lost in the glory revealed in you. Their remembrance shall be lost, except as they serve to increase that glory. How earnest, how diligent, how importunate then should we be for this interest in Christ! May we all be truly engaged in seeking the salvation of God!

An improvement in connection with the present solemn occasion demands our attention. And we are

furnished with abundant consolation, for all our mourning and affliction, in the application of the words we have considered to the life and death of her whose remains lie before us.

To draw the character of this our sister in the Lord must at present be needless to you, who were so well acquainted with her, in all her intercourse with you and in all her labors. Yet to pass it wholly by would be wrong. Not to her, for she is beyond our praise, and is already reaping her reward with him who seeth the heart, and with whom the memory of the just is forever blessed. But with respect to ourselves it would be wrong, because it would withhold that profitable impression which is made on the mind by the exhibition of the life of godliness. This I would not omit, and shall therefore barely suggest the outlines, while it is left with your recollection to fill up and improve the character.

Mrs. Amelia Flint was the daughter of Col. Hezekiah Bissell of Windsor, a gentleman of high respectable standing at the bar, who held offices under the government of this State, and with fidelity discharged his trust. Mrs. Flint was his eldest child and received the advantages of a pious education.

With a constitution that possessed great sensibility, and labored under great debility, and having a mind that was quick in apprehension, she was fitted to be an eminent pattern of ardent and humble piety; she was qualified for great usefulness in the sphere in which God in his wisdom placed her. By his almighty grace in early life she was thus prepared, and afterwards placed among you in a most important station. With what ardor and diligence she sought to be useful here, especially during the late solemnity which attended the outpouring of the spirit of God on this people, you must gratefully remember. With what anxiety did she consult the good of this people as the wife of their minister? With

cheerfulness she opened her doors to receive and accommodate you at her house, to hold your meetings for private religious instruction and improvement. With zeal she engaged in aiding you in singing the praises of God, even when she had become greatly debilitated. And with pleasure she heard of the improvement you made, and of the prosperity of the work of the Lord. No labors were too great, no sacrifices of personal ease too dear for her friends, especially for her associate friends in Jesus.

As a wife and the mother of children, she felt her weighty concern. She was ever desirous to be a help meet to her husband, as the head of a family and a minister of the gospel. Her parental feelings were peculiarly tender, and her concern for the children which God had given her was very great. She felt the importance of her charge, and spake of it with anxiety and with prayer, that God would replenish her with his grace to be faithful. The instructions she gave her children, and the prayers she offered for and with them, flowed from the tenderest parental feelings sanctified by divine grace.

Her individual concerns, in spiritual matters, above all others, received the most faithful attention. Under many and long continued bodily infirmities, she struggled with patience. Her last illness was lengthy, but endured with resignation. That flattering expectation which seems inseparable from consumptive complaints she had indeed for a season, but it never diverted her attention from the importance of that change, which she had reason to suppose could not be very far off. Ready to converse with her fellow pilgrims to Heaven, she felt an ardor of soul that was often too much for her strength. Her sickness, in the review of days and privileges past, in considering the hand of God in all her afflictions, in self examination, in cultivating a meek

and quiet spirit, and dwelling on the glories of the Redeemer, was faithfully improved.

With all this engagedness and zeal, Mrs. Flint was humble and diffident when the subject of her personal interest in Christ and her attainments was introduced. Her unworthiness, her poor improvement of privileges, her coldness were lamented, while the lowest place at the feet of Christ was desired, and in every thing her love for him was manifested. With this spirit of piety she passed thro' all her labors until her last moment arrived, when she must be delivered from them, and continue the service of her Lord in the employments and exercises of the just in Heaven. Then pointing with her hand to the regions of the blessed, her soul desired to be there, and left its clayey tabernacle to enter on her rest. Surely, *Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord; yea saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them.*

In the view of these truths, My dear bereaved brother in the Lord, and in the recollection of other things with you more interesting, you have every thing to comfort you, but the presence of your departed friend. In this remember your loss is her gain. This is God's will, and this thought is enough to quiet every complaint. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away." And that you have such hope that he has taken her to himself, is a portion in your cup which is not always given. Your feelings and trials are known both now, and as they shall arise in future. The thorny path has been often trod before you. The wormwood and the gall have been tasted. The experience of many can tell you, unless the law of God had been their delight, they should then have perished in their affliction. This is indeed a consolation and encouragement; but another is unspeakably greater. Your condition is perfectly known unto him who orders all things in covenant love to his people, and who hath graciously promised that

all things shall work together for good to them that love him. Who knows what is the end of this your trial? We see it not. But God knows, and faith reads it in his word. "He chasteneth us for our profit that we may be partakers of his holiness. Chastening yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby." You have sat by the side of mourners, and proved a minister of consolation, by directing them to God the source of comfort. To the same source would we call your attention. Now you know not what he doeth, but from his word and the throne of his grace by his Spirit, you shall know hereafter. You shall arise and praise him for his fatherly chastisements. May God support and comfort you through his abounding grace!—

The Mother and other connections of the deceased will find the consideration, that this is the Lord's doing, the most effectual to comfort and compose their hearts. All the ways of God are perfect. In those appointments which are most painful, his love to his people is most expressed. When you consider the life and conversation of your departed friend, follow her wherein she followed Christ. When you consider your loss, remember the dead in Christ are blessed. Could she address you from the mansions of the blessed, how emphatic would be the words we have considered—*Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, &c.* Let not these words have less weight with you now they are spoken by the spirit of God, in the record of the scriptures. Follow on in the Lord, and in the time of your departure you shall know there is no occasion for weeping over friends who die in the Lord.

With a few words to this congregation I shall conclude. Every thing on this occasion is calculated to excite within you thoughts that are interesting and solemn. Be intreated to improve them for your spiritual profit. Before many days, others shall be numbered with the dead. And it is not long before we shall all be

here no more. Every instance of mortality calls us to attend as we tread onward to the grave. Especially are you called, by the remembrance of her life and the view of her death, whose remains are before you, to be also ready. Let the humble followers of Christ, remembering the joys of the pious on earth in the prosperity of religion, think of that joy unspeakable and full of glory in Heaven, and be quickened in their diligence. Let the inconsiderate recollect that soon these things of which we speak shall be realized. How unhappy if the summons of death find you sleeping in fatal security ! Watch, for ye know not the time. Be up and doing what your hands find to do, with all your might, for there is no repentance in the grave, and the end is at hand.

May God by his grace reconcile us all to himself in Jesus Christ, enable us to walk by faith and in union with him, that we may serve him acceptably here, and enter into the rest prepared for his people hereafter !

AMEN.